



# SEAT PLEASANT NEWS

NOVEMBER 2012 EDITION Visit us on the web at: [www.seatpleasantmd.gov](http://www.seatpleasantmd.gov)

## ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>At-Large Ward Meetings</i>	3
<i>Tax Differential Concept</i>	4
<i>City Hires New Police Chief</i>	6

## City of Seat Pleasant

### Mayor

Eugene W. Grant

### Council President

Kelly Porter

(At-Large Councilmember)

### Ward I Councilmember

Elenora Simms

### Ward II Councilmember

Aretha Stephenson

### Ward III Councilmember

Reveral Yeargin

### Ward IV Councilmember

Gerald Raynor

### Ward V Councilmember

Eugene F. Kennedy

### At-Large Council member

Johnie L. Higgs, Sr.

### Acting City Administrator

Robert L. Ashton

### Treasurer

Robert L. Ashton

### Chief of Police

Chris Cotillio

### Director of Public Works

Johnny Thompson

### City Clerk

Dashaun Lanham

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE



The City of Seat Pleasant: A *City of Excellence*, made history at the Saturday, September 29, 2012, **City Center Groundbreaking Ceremony**, with over 3,500 attendees, City Officials broke ground on 15 acres of land scheduled in the years to follow being built into an integrated, distributed, renewable infrastructure project.

The ceremony marked a milestone in a series of projects and efforts that will result in an ecological, sustainable "City Center" that brings the City of Seat Pleasant and nature together in harmony. Several reasons made this Groundbreaking Ceremony such an important historical celebration for this community. One of the event's participants had this to say; "Bates Trucking appreciates the opportunity to service our customers face to face at community events. This monumental effort from Seat Pleasant to bring this type of environmental awareness allowed our company to encourage residents to recycle, address questions on what can and cannot be recycled and help engage residents as well as local business owners on the importance of preservation and conservation of our resources. Mayor Grant, on behalf of the owners of Bates Trucking, we thank you and your staff for taking a noteworthy idea and turning it into such a remarkable event and allowing Bates Trucking to help support and be a part of it," stated **Tara Lewis**, a representative of Bates Trucking.

There was a tremendous celebrity line up of performers for this celebration including Radio-One MC **Sheila Stewart** and DJ "**The Noise Maker**" **Rico**, Grammy Winning Recording Artists **Raheem DeVaughn** and **Chrisette Michele** and Gospel Recording Artist **Stephen Hurd**, to name a few. Additionally, celebrity Tennis Champion and Founder of V\*STARR Interiors, LLC, **Venus Williams** gave a pre-recorded message to event audience members, as the City is in talks with V\*STARR incorporating their interior design ideas into certain aspects of the City Center Project.

Another historical aspect of this City Center Project is the City of Seat Pleasant has not broken ground on a development project in nearly 30 years, yet it is situated on Central Avenue in the heart of the Prince Georges County, bordering Washington DC, and has a Metro Station Addison Road making Transit Oriented Development possible for this underserved and overlooked community.

In early June, Council Members supported me unanimously in a vote to move forward with the construction of the City Center Project, a planned LEED-Platinum, zero carbon "City Center." This now \$73.6 Million dollar project is the City's largest undertaking in its history, the largest Public/Private Partnership (P3) of a municipality with a population of 10,000 and the largest "green" project of its kind in

(CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE)

(MAYOR'S MESSAGE CONTINUED)

In the State of Maryland.

The City strategically partnered with Kratos Infrastructure and its partners to complete the City Center Project, which is comprised of a city hall, senior housing, medical/wellness center, community center, and recreational facilities. The result will be a community of the future whereas infrastructure is energy producing and sustainable and will provide essential services, create jobs, and generate new tax revenue for the City of Seat Pleasant. Additionally, the new "City Center" will create a vibrant, aesthetically pleasing urban environment by integrating parks, community gardens, biking and walking paths and greening roof-tops.

The "City Center" project is just a catalyst. For Seat Pleasant to be a true "Community of the Future" it has to be a collaborative effort. What will follow from this Groundbreaking Ceremony will be a series of projects, unveilings, and ribbon cuttings working in collaboration and partnership with some of most accomplished names in energy production, sustainable design, gardening, home improvement, and healthcare that will ultimately bring the community members of Seat Pleasant closer to healthier living, make the community more self-sufficient and vibrant and propel the City itself into the forefront of national efforts to reduce our carbon footprint in an urban environment such as ours.

Planning for the "City Center" project is slated to begin in early October. The project will take a total of four years to complete. The overall economic impact on the City of Seat Pleasant is expected to be vast as the "City Center" project will create construction jobs, along with the retraining of the local work force to service the new distributed power generation systems once the project is completed. Living wage jobs will be created as a result of the completed medical/wellness center, and senior housing. With more amenities and housing, Seat Pleasant anticipates the potential for the creation of a new industrial base and will be able to increase real estate revenue without having to increase the tax burden to the citizens to cover the City's infrastructure and services. All this being accomplished without being dependent on state and federal government subsidies.

---

## OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

The City Council has introduced the following legislations in the month of October.



### Resolution R-13-08

Resolution R-13-08 to approve the City of Seat Pleasant designation of a Community Legacy area and receipt of finance for the Community Legacy projects described in the Community Legacy application with such financing to be obtained directly from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) of the State of Maryland or through other Departments or agencies of the State of Maryland.

### Ordinance O-13-04

Ordinance O-13-04 for the purpose of regulating Special Events within the City of Seat Pleasant; requiring an applicant who sponsors or promotes a Special Event to first obtain a Special Event permit; specifying requirements and fees for Special Event permits; providing that the title of this Ordinance shall be deemed a fair summary; and generally relating to Special Events within the City.

Copies of legislation are available from the Office of the City Clerk at:

City Hall  
6301 Addison Road  
Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743-2125

## COUNCIL CORNER

### A WORD FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT KELLY PORTER AND COUNCILMEMBER AT-LARGE JOHNIE L. HIGGS, SR.



As Councilmembers At-Large, we want our citizens to know that we are always available to work along with their Ward representative. We will work with the five Ward representatives to help Seat Pleasant become a world class town in which to live, work and raise our families. We want to engage residents in the political process by discussing with us what needs to be done, as well as how best to address those issues and the timetable and guidelines we want to use to bring them to a resolution. That is why we have decided to have At-Large meetings in conjunction with existing Ward meetings. Our first meeting will be Friday, November 9th in the City Hall Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m.



There will be many topics of discussion; including security and code enforcement. Please remember we are an additional resource along with your Councilmember to address those issues that concern you. We not only need your input but your participation so that we can solve these issues together. We want to make sure you have ample opportunity to be heard. It also will give you an opportunity to deal with some issues before a Public Session. We do not want you have to wait until Council meetings to air your concerns. Your concerns matter, you matter.

### A WORD FROM COUNCILMEMBER SIMMS

Cooler weather is on the way and that means people may use space heaters to heat their home. When using space heaters, remember to exercise caution. Space heaters carry a much greater risk of causing a fire than central heating, such as furnaces. Space heaters present a greater potential for human error such as leaving them too close to combustible materials or failing to install, fuel, operate and maintain them properly.



Here are some safety tips to remember when using space heaters

- You must have approval from your building manager (if you are renting) prior to purchasing or using a space heater.
- The space heater selected must be tested by an independent testing laboratory such as Underwriter's Laboratories (UL).
  - The preferred style of space heaters are fully enclosed by design and have no external surfaces that reach temperatures capable of igniting, such as an oil filled radiant heaters.
  - ***Keep the space heater accessible - do not store anything within three feet of the unit. The leading cause of space heater fires are combustible too close to the heater.***
  - The unit must have a thermostatic controls and automatic features.
  - The space heater must be plugged in directly into an outlet. Do not use a light-duty extension cord or a multi-outlet strip/surge protector, it can start a fire with a high-wattage appliance. The unit must be grounded with a three-pronged plug.
  - Do not use an extension cord or strip plug.
  - Run the power cord so that no one steps on or trips over it.
  - Turn off the heater when you leave the room—unplug the heater ***when you leave for the day.***



(COUNCIL CORNER CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE)

(COUNCIL CORNER CONTINUED)



### A WORD FROM COUNCILMEMBER STEPHENSON

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported me in this last election for City Council. I do not take your support lightly. I count it an honor and a privilege to serve the residents of this great City. I will continue to work on your behalf and do my utmost to help move this City forward and address your concerns. I look forward the meeting and talking with you in the coming year. Thank you again for your support.

### A WORD FROM COUNCILMEMBER EUGENE F. KENNEDY

I would like to thank all those who supported me in my bid to serve the City of Seat Pleasant once again. This time as the Councilmember for Ward V. My commitment to this City has never waived or waned. I am eager to get to work and tackle those issues that are important to you. I will work hard to represent you and your interests and will work with the rest of your elected officials to make Seat Pleasant a City you can be proud of.

## THE TAX DIFFERENTIAL CONCEPT

By Robert L. Ashton, City Treasurer

The purpose of this article is to highlight the legal basis behind the Tax Differential Concept in the State of Maryland and in the next article illustrate its impact on homeowners county real estate taxes.

### LEGAL BASIS FOR THE CONCEPT OF THE TAX DIFFERENTIAL

Section 6-305 of the Tax-Property Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland mandates that **Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Garrett, Harford, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties** meet annually with the governing bodies of municipal corporations to discuss the property tax rate to be set for assessments of property in the municipal corporations. If it is demonstrated that a municipal corporation performs services or programs in lieu of similar county services or programs, the governing body of the County **shall impose** the County property tax on assessments of property in the municipal corporation at a rate that is **less than the general county property tax rate**.

The section indentified above instructs the counties noted to provide Property tax set-offs to homeowners to compensate for double taxation of municipal taxpayers occurring when both municipal and county property taxes are levied to fund similar or identical services. As a result, a number of Maryland counties compensate municipal tax payers with property tax set-offs through a tax rate differential. A tax rate differential results in a lower County property tax rate within the boundaries of a municipality. The major governmental services performed by municipalities that may result in tax set-offs include police protection, highways and street maintenance, sanitation and waste collection, planning and zoning services and recreation and parks services.

In the next month's newsletter, I will illustrate the effect of the Tax Differential on the homeowner's tax bill to Prince George's County.

## A WORD FROM PUBLIC WORKS

### VANDALISM IN GOODWIN PARK

The Public Works Department needs your help. There has been a continuation of vandalism in the bathrooms at Goodwin Park. This activity has caused a hardship on the City because we have to repair the bathrooms on short notice. The vandals are stealing copper from throughout the bathrooms. We have

(CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE)



---

**(PUBLIC WORKS CONTINUED)**

placed numerous locks to try to cut down on this activity. Unfortunately, it still remains a problem. The Public Works Department is asking that everyone keep an eye out for suspicious activity and alert the police.

**STREET SWEEPER SCHEDULE AND SIGN INSTALLATION**

Most street sweeper signs have now been installed. Signs still have to be installed in Ward V. Ward V should be completed within the next few weeks. Once all the signs have been posted, residents must remember to move their cars accordingly. Those who do not comply are subject to fines and towing.

---

**CODE ENFORCEMENT F.Y.I.**

This month the Code Enforcement Department will be sending out renewal letters for all rental properties and businesses within the City for their 2013 licenses. All licenses will expire on December 31, 2012. FYI- If you're renting your home in Seat Pleasant, please ask your landlord if they have a rental license through the City. If they don't please have them contact the code enforcement officer for further information regarding the process and fees.

---

**A WORD FROM THE SEAT PLEASANT POLICE DEPARTMENT**

This month many will travel the roads for the Thanksgiving holiday to unite with family and friends. Please remember to be safe on the highways and byways as you travel to your destination and exercise caution when transporting your precious cargo - your children.

Nationally, traffic collisions are the leading cause of death among children ages 5 - 14 and many are also injured. Many of these deaths and injuries could have been prevented if the children were properly restrained in seat belts or child safety seats. Children need to be restrained in belt-positioning booster seats once they have outgrown forward-facing child safety seats until they are big enough to fit properly in an adult seat belt.

Things to remember when transporting children or using child safety/booster seats in a vehicle:

- All children ages 12 and under should sit in the back seat properly restrained. The rear seat is the safest place for children.
- Never use pillows, books or towels to boost the height of a child. They can slide around and increase the likelihood of injury.
- Make sure everyone is buckled up correctly. Infants and very young children should be in child safety seats. Young children should be correctly buckled using a booster seat.
- Read the instructions for the child safety or booster seat and your vehicle owner's manual before installation. If the vehicle only has lap belts in the back seat, consider having shoulder belts installed by a dealer or repair facility. Most vehicle manufacturers offer retrofit belt kits for this purpose.
- After installing a child safety or booster seat, do not forget to test for a snug and secure fit. Properly fitting lap and shoulder belts reduce the risk for belt-induced injuries, which can occur when lap or lap/shoulder belts are a small child's only restraint.
- Always fill out and mail the registration card that comes with the safety/booster seat so notifications can be made in case of a recall.



---

(POLICE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED)

### NEW POLICE CHIEF HIRED

The City welcomes a new Police Chief to Seat Pleasant. Chris Cotillo comes to the City after retiring, as a Major, from the Prince George's County Police Department after 28 years of service. During that time he had several assignments to include but not limited to, being a member of SWAT for seven years, Commanding swat and tactical operations of the Special Operations Division for four years, and being a member of Internal Affairs for four years. His last assignment was as the Commander of District 2 station in Bowie for 4 1/2 years, where he was in charge of 200 officers, over a 134 square miles with a population of over 200,000 residents. During his tenure at the District 2 station crime was reduced by double digits. He has experience at every supervisory level of patrol. It should also be noted that his son Matthew is following in dad's foot steps and is a one year veteran of the Prince George's County Police Department assigned to District III. We look forward to working with him and believe his extensive background and experience will prove to be a valuable asset to our community.

---

### A WORD FROM CPAC CRIME REPORTS

Did you know that you can go online and see the types of crimes that have happened in your neighborhood? Check out [www.crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com). This site is the largest, most comprehensive crime-mapping website in the world. Local law enforcement agencies throughout North America partner with Crime Reports to bring us accurate, official, and up-to-date crime information for cities throughout the country. At this website, you can enter an address (like Seat Pleasant) and a map of the area will come up with identifying markers showing the locations of various incidents. You may see things like theft of vehicle, theft from vehicle, assault, breaking and entering, etc., and it provides you with the time of the crime, the address, and the agency that reported the crime (i.e., Prince Georges County Police). For the sake of privacy, the address is always rounded to the block level. In addition to crimes, you can also view national sex offender data, too. The map shows the location where known sex offenders from all 50 states reside. Using crimereports.com is a great way for citizens to be informed about crime in our area. It helps us to be more vigilant when we see things happening in our neighborhoods and gives us a chance to implement crime prevention efforts – such as the Neighborhood Watch Program. In addition to providing all of this information, the site also allows you to sign up for free, automated, email crime alerts. Take advantage of this free service.

Get involved in Seat Pleasant – the more you know the better we'll be! If you need any information or want us to discuss anything with the Seat Pleasant Police Department or Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, please email us at [cpac.seatpleasant@live.com](mailto:cpac.seatpleasant@live.com). Keep safe!

---

### SEAT PLEASANT FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS



Members of the Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Company Inc. hit the streets last month to make their presence known as a part of Fire Prevention Week, which was the second week of October. Volunteers visited area schools to teach children how to make sure they are prepared in the event of a fire at school or at home. The theme for this year's Fire prevention Week focused on having two ways out in the event of a fire. "Volunteers did a run through for students on what to do from the first signs

of smoke to calling 911 to the arrival of the fire department" said Phil Martin the Fire Company's Fire Prevention Coordinator. "It was very informative for us especially because we got the opportunity to see how

(CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE)

( (FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUED)

how much these children knew, some knew exactly what to do and some knew very little about fire safety" Martin also stated. Fire Fighters donned tier turnout gear, helmet, and air packs for the entire school day at Carmody Hills so students could be comfortable with the Fire Fighters in hopes of educating that fire fighters are friends not "scary monsters"

One thing we did this year different was simulate 911 calls with the entire class so they can be prepared for the basic information needed to get a fire department response in the event of a fire" says Martin. The Volunteers also participated in two area parades in the Pepper Mill community as well as in Capitol Heights. The fire company plans to be back in the schools in November to monitor the fire drills to see how the students handle a live drill.

For more information on the Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Company Inc. or to have them visit your school, call [301-865-1957](tel:301-865-1957)



**THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
WISH YOU AND YOURS**



**A HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

City of Seat Pleasant

*"A City of Excellence"*

6301 Addison Road

Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743



PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
SOUTHERN MARYLAND  
PERMIT #235



**REMEMBER.....**

**The City of Seat Pleasant**

*"A City of Excellence"*

**Invites you to the**

## **ANNUAL VETERANS DAY PROGRAM**

**Monday, November 12, 2012**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Seat Pleasant Activity Center**

**5720 Addison Road**

**Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743**

**For more information contact Darlinda  
Sanders at Seat Pleasant City Hall at**

**301-336-2600**